

SYNOPSIS OF GOM ALLIANCE REGIONAL RESTORATION COORDINATION
TEAM STATE-LED WORKSHOP, GALVESTON, TEXAS
MAY 22-24, 2007

MAY 22, DAY 1 – TEXAS ISSUES

- Guest speakers discussed a range of topics relevant to coastal Texas restoration activities, including sea level rise and coastal wetlands change, habitat and development, sea grass status and trends, Interagency Cooperation Teams and Beneficial Use Groups, funding mechanisms such as CIAP and GOMESA, various agency coastal programs, priorities and impediments to restoration partnerships, landowner incentives, bi-national cooperation, and project-specific government policies and funding.

MAY 23, DAY 2 – MEXICO ISSUES

- Guest speakers discussed numerous issues including new trends for restoring wetlands, the Mexican strategy for sustainable management of seas and coasts, international commitments and restoration actions by CONANP, CONAFOR, and CONABIO, lessons learned on community-level and productive restorations, restoration of mangrove forest in the Terminos Lagoon, the Mexican Fund for the Conservation of Nature's Gulf of Mexico Program, Pronatura, TPWD and Mexican cooperative restoration efforts, and general discussions and interactions about United States and Mexican issues involving conservation and restoration.

NOTE: Individual Power Point presentations are posted on the work group website at <http://www2.nos.noaa.gov/gomex/restoration/welcome.html>.

Action Items or Recommendations from Days 1 and 2

- Need to design an instrument or mechanism that will allow US and Mexico to work together on restoration efforts (perhaps through GOMF.)
- Dr. Dokken will provide Mr. Álvarez with contacts for the TCOON project at TAMU-CC.
- Maria Araujo will email the website addresses for the various forums she mentioned in her presentation.

MAY 24, DAY 3 – Implementation of the Governors Action Plan

R1-2. **Dr. Dokken** needs this kind of input from each of the State Reps. as to what is happening in each State. Plus we need to know where the State priorities are.

R1-3. A separate grant has been given to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to work on this item. **Mr. Woodrow** said there has been a conference call to develop a steering committee with the other 5 States. They still do not have the contract signed by EPA yet. **Mr. Woodrow** will keep the RRCT informed on progress.

R1-4. **Dr. Dokken** said we can identify issues and suggest ways to resolve the issues, but a lot of these issues take legislative action, and public review and comment. We need to focus on these issues.

R1-5. We need to know what the impediments are. Thus far, we have not heard a lot about impediments. The group may not feel that there are any major problems.

R1-6. The amount of paperwork that is required of recipients is always an issue.

R1-7. How do we encourage landowners to involve themselves in conservation projects? This is also a socio-economic issue.

R1-8. **Larry Parson** and his working group from Corps of Engineers are doing a good job focusing on this issue.

R1-9. **Dr. Dokken** said we need to pull the data out where people can see it. He said we will be working with the Bureau of the Census and the NOAA Population data base to compile that information.

R2. **Dr. Dokken** said this is not built into the GOMF contract with EPA but it is critical. Dr. Susan Rees with the Corps of Engineers made an excellent presentation at the last workshop we held. They have some good modeling techniques they are using in projecting storm hazards. **Mr. Calnan** said the R-2 issues need to be factored into R-1. He pointed out that a healthy coastal ecosystem equals increased safety. The Louisiana State plan has changed over time to provide that kind of emphasis. Global warming is becoming an issue, also.

Mr. Benson said that when we meet in July in St. Petersburg there is a sub-team being assembled that will meet with us in July. This will provide us an opportunity to address the R-2.

State Reps. raised a number of questions that may need to be addressed at the July meeting or further up the line. These questions included how team recommendations get converted into policy changes; how the implementation process works; need for support at high State levels; and possible testing of the process for implementation of recommendations. Some of these questions may be answered at the July GOM Alliance meeting.

Specific discussion was held on R1-6—Identify administrative and legal processes in granting agencies that may either facilitate or impede wetland restoration and conservation project planning and implementation.

Action Items from Day 3

- Chris David will put links on the working group website to such places as TGLO and Corps of Engineers electronic data bases.
- Woody Woodrow will keep RRCT informed on progress on the TPWD-led workshop on freshwater inflows.
- RRCT will work with the new sub-team that is forming to deal with community resiliency.
- All State Reps. will respond to the GOMF questionnaire by first of July.
- Dr. Dokken will talk with the States of Louisiana and Mississippi about having regular State representation at the RRCT meetings.
- Randy Runnels will take the lead on the sea level change issue that the State Reps. have expressed an interest in.
- RE R1-6, Kris Benson will add statement on bi-national funding mechanisms.